

...There in the distance was the helicopter. It was banking in over Culver Lake, and because it was downwind of us, was silent in its approach. None of us had ever seen a real Army helicopter before. It was huge and dark green, and had propellers at each end. As it touched down, the crowd was pulled toward it; then a blast of wind power hit us, and we fell back and parted to let it land. The Mayor and the Police Chief were yelling at people to get back and get down, but no one could hear a sound. The thunder of the Armed Forces had arrived.

The wind from the propellers was fierce, and the crowd formed a tight circle around the aircraft. My friends and I were at the front of the crowd, staring slack-jawed at the women's tops and dresses caught in the updraft. No sooner had the chopper touched down, when the side door blew open right in front of us, and a soldier in a helmet threw down a small set of stairs. A few men in dark suits scurried down, and before anyone had time to prepare, there he was.

He was shorter than he appeared on the news, and thinner. But so charismatic. I heard a few of the grown women gasp. I felt what everyone did; the need to move toward him. The crowd around me surged forward en masse, and he smiled and pushed his way into us. People were grabbing him and touching his clothes, and he was reaching and taking every hand he could. I was picked up by the crowd, and carried along. He was a movie star - a Beatle.

The town band kicked into their Tiajuana Brass medley, and the crowd was lifting and swirling around Pierre, and everyone was yelling and laughing, and calling out that they'd touched him, or crying for a pen for an autograph. He was giggling and waving at people, and holding babies high in the air for pictures, when who should push her way up to him - but Mrs. Montella. The Tube. As soon as she got in front of him, she looked right into his eyes, and started to dance. It wasn't a nice dance, but a dirty go-go dance. She was wearing one of her smallest tube tops, and her big knockers were flapping and slapping. The Prime Minister was laughing, and riveted by the performance. Then he started to dance with her! The crowd cheered at his gumption, and for the moment, forgot the shame of his partner. I was pressed close to them, frozen by the spectacle...